

This is a common question in many locations throughout the City.

In Iowa, the only time a person has the right-of-way when crossing the street is in a marked crosswalk. When a person crossed the street outside of a marked crosswalk, that person is doing so at their own risk and does not have any right over a vehicle traveling that road. Extreme care should be taken if you have to cross a street at a location not marked as a crosswalk.

Recent national studies have found that marking some crosswalks increases the risk to pedestrians crossing the street. In general, people who use a marked crosswalk were found to do so rather blindly. They were not aware of the vehicles in the area, feeling that being in the crosswalk gave them the ultimate protection. The result of giving a pedestrian a false sense of security could be tragic.

If a crosswalk is used frequently (as in the central business district), the use keeps drivers aware that the crosswalk exist. Problems surface when a driver travels across a crosswalk many times without encountering anyone. This driver may then be unaware when someone is in the crosswalk. For this reason, crosswalks are only installed where a clear need exists.

Most pedestrian accidents that occur at marked crosswalks may be the drivers fault; however, could have been prevented by observant pedestrians. Remember that a 150 pound person is no match for a 4,000 pound vehicle.